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KING COUNTY LEP PROVISIO OUTREACH PANEL

April 1, 2014

Panel Moderated by:

MATIAS VALENZUELA

Also Present:

VU LE
SILI SAVUSA
JUAN JOSE BOCANEGRA
MOHAMED SHEIKH HASSAN

1 CONSTANTINE: It is the goal for us to be the best running
2 government anywhere. And if we're going to be well run,
3 that means that we have to be efficiently and effectively
4 reaching the people, the customers, we seek to serve. So
5 even if we're Nordstrom, in this case, our job is to meet
6 our customers where they are, to engage them and to make
7 sure that they're getting the service that we're attempting
8 to provide.

9 This is a great community. It's also a community that's
10 diversifying -- is very diverse and diversifying rapidly,
11 and that is across the economic spectrum.

12 Our job as leaders of this government is to make sure that
13 we are keeping up with a rapidly changing population, that
14 we are keeping up with the way the world looks now and the
15 way it's going to look in the next 10, 20 or 30 years. We
16 have the will in this community, I think, to do it. We have
17 a wealthy community that has, you know, across it the
18 resources to do the right thing. And it's up to us to
19 recognize where the disconnects are and to cure them and the
20 work you're going to do is essential.

21 With that, I want to thank the county council for
22 (inaudible) lead in this. You can pass that back to
23 (inaudible).

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible) it was probably my
25 fault.

1 CONSTANTINE: And again, I want to thank each one of you
2 for being part (inaudible). Thank you.

3 VALENZUELA: Thank you for coming, Mr. Executive.

4 Do we have one more person who is willing (inaudible)?

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, sure. Linda (inaudible). I'm
6 with Superior Court. I apologize for (inaudible).

7 VALENZUELA: (Inaudible) several people made mention of
8 this proviso (inaudible) timeline. And one of the things
9 that -- this is the work (inaudible). We said -- well, we
10 wanted to make sure that we included some level of community
11 and for the process. And actually, we, as a planning team,
12 threw out to this group two options. One is to either have
13 a panel or go out to communities and speak to organizations.
14 And the group said (inaudible) timeline said "yes" and
15 "yes." So they wanted to do everything. So it's -- I think
16 it's a show of some of the commitment that some of the
17 (inaudible) folks really wanted to do this well.

18 So we want to -- I'm going to start the first question. I
19 want to start just generally having you talk about
20 yourselves, some of your background, and also the
21 organizations that you work with. And then I have a series
22 of questions, but then I also want to make sure that we
23 involve the audience and the people that are here. So we
24 want to keep it loose.

25 So folks have -- after they go through their initial

1 introductions and talk about their organizations, let me do
2 the first question. You can start asking questions as they
3 come up. I think we want to keep this fluid and dynamic.
4 All right.

5 So I just wanted to start off, if you could each just talk
6 about your background, your organization, what you do, and
7 specifically how you serve the limited English-proficient
8 populations as well.

9 With the panel, we're going to start with ladies first.
10 Sili, if you could start first (inaudible) --

11 (Inaudible colloquy)

12 SAVUSA: I know. Hi, everybody. My name is Sili Savusa.
13 I'm the executive director at the White Center Community
14 Development Association. And those of you who know and have
15 relationships with other CDs and community non-profits know
16 that that means nothing. It means we're the ones who have
17 to tell -- everybody else is telling us what to do.

18 So I -- you know, I'm a community organizer at heart and I
19 do a lot of work. You might have seen my -- especially in
20 the education kind of field and world. I'm a former school
21 board member at Highline, and I currently am on the board of
22 trustees at Highline Community College. But a lot of the
23 work that I do in the community has been around --
24 organizing around education specific to Pacific Islanders
25 and kids of color, and -- over the last 30 years or so.

1 You know, I'm in a great position as the executive
2 director of the White Center CD because I live there in
3 White Center. And me and other residents helped to form and
4 build the CDA, so I feel like I'm in a really unique and
5 blessed position to be able to organize and to be able to
6 put together work that is community driven and resident led.

7 And my whole -- I -- (inaudible) the system work that I do
8 in partnerships with (inaudible) other organizations and
9 other institutions have been around ensuring resident voice
10 in, you know, everything from program delivery to program
11 evaluation, and mobilizing parents in a way that actually
12 helps to validate their own -- their existence in a
13 community that's so diverse, but also we know that it is
14 also very racist to its core. And so these kinds of
15 opportunities don't happen enough as far as I'm concerned.
16 Because, you know, not only is it intimidating, but a lot of
17 you don't have relationships with community folks and -- but
18 you're setting the stage for funds to come into the
19 communities, for policy to be put together, and to drive
20 legislation that happens at a state level.

21 So, you know, my work is meaningless if I don't have
22 allies like you in the room, white allies like Allen, whom I
23 can call on and whom I can say -- call something bullshit.
24 That really creates an obstacle for a lot of the families
25 that we're working on behalf of. And I don't say this to

1 criticize anybody. I just say that because the more that we
2 can have a real conversation around the work the more
3 meaningful your work will be and the more impact it will
4 have on the communities and the way that we need to work
5 together.

6 So -- and King County is really special in itself as a
7 region. And having been -- and I know Vu and Juan could
8 speak to the same, having been in different parts of the
9 country and talk about the diversity. You know, the whole
10 word "diversity" is kind of thrown around, you know, like,
11 "Oh, yeah, we're diverse." But I know we have some level of
12 understanding of what it takes to do the work, and
13 we keep -- you know, we keep messing up. And the -- we need
14 to have relationships, institutions and community groups
15 because those times that we mess up, we tend not to talk to
16 each other. We just get pissed off and then just say,
17 "Okay, here they go again."

18 So for me, at the core is the relationship building that
19 needs to happen in our communities where the county programs
20 exist and really utilizing the talent that's in the
21 community and on staff, many of us people of color. I used
22 to work at the City of Seattle Human Services Department. I
23 know I got that job because of who I am and the community I
24 represent. The problem is probably nine times out of ten,
25 when you're -- when work was being done that impacts Samoans

1 and Pacific Islanders, I never got asked to be in those
2 meetings. So I would urge you to utilize the people with
3 color on staff, really, you know, help them find a voice in
4 their leadership in the work here at the county level and
5 build those relationships and communities.

6 So which way are we going to go?

7 VALENZUELA: I knew that there was a reason why we started
8 with you. (Inaudible). Let's go with Vu next, and then
9 we'll come down the line with Juan and --

10 LE: Good afternoon, everyone. I am -- my name is Vu. I
11 am the executive director of the Vietnamese Friendship
12 Association. We've been around for about 36 years. We
13 provide direct service to low-income Vietnamese and
14 non-Vietnamese immigrant refugee youth and families. So we
15 have (inaudible) programs. We partner with Seattle World
16 School to do a variety of programs. On Saturday mornings,
17 we have probably about 150 kids who are limited English
18 speakers arrive on Saturday mornings to learn math and
19 English for three hours. During the week, we also have four
20 days of academic services. During the summer, we have
21 summer science academy and other programs supporting these
22 students, the majority of whom just arrived to the United
23 States, and they tend to be older. And these older kids are
24 the ones who have the most trouble graduating from high
25 school. Only about 60 percent of them graduate, whereas I

1 think the statewide average is 80 percent. And among the --
2 and the older you go the harder it is for them to pick up
3 the language, so it's more likely they are to drop out of
4 high school. So we provide a lot of support for that.

5 I also chair the Southeast Seattle Education Coalition,
6 which formed about two years ago, really in response to the
7 fact that southeast schools are some of the most struggling
8 schools. We have the most diversity in Seattle schools. We
9 also have the most struggling schools. Some of our schools
10 are schools like Dunlap or Dearborn and are 95 to 98 percent
11 kids of color, 85 to 90 percent are low-income, and the
12 problem is that they don't have a voice because parents
13 can't speak the language, so they don't know how to navigate
14 the system. And we have a system in Seattle where the
15 loudest voice wins. And it's kind of an understood thing
16 that if you want something to be done in Seattle schools,
17 you get 50 of your friends to email the school board members
18 and show up wearing T-shirts. Our parents cannot do that.
19 And then they get blamed for not being engaged with the
20 system, which is absolutely ridiculous. And that's the
21 system that we have.

22 So we have formed a coalition of 50 to 60 organizations
23 mainly led by communities of color and partnering with our
24 schools to band together into a coalition, because now we
25 have to be that loud voice while we're helping to empower

1 parents to be their own voice. So that's what we've been
2 focusing on. You know, we have several key areas that we
3 are focusing on, one is to make sure that families still
4 have access to high quality early learning programs, make
5 sure that there's wraparound services, case management, high
6 school counselors, making sure that, you know, discipline is
7 fair and proportional, and making sure that -- that -- what
8 am I missing? Excuse me. A bunch of other stuff that is
9 very important (inaudible).

10 (Inaudible colloquy)

11 LE: I mean, we're dealing with a whole bunch of stuff.
12 But really the main issue is that we just don't have a
13 voice. We don't have a voice and our families are tokenized
14 a lot, you know. Like, you know, we have schools or school
15 districts that say, "Oh, we have this amazing strategic
16 plan. Let's plan this thing." And then, "Oh, we didn't get
17 the communities of color to buy into this," you know, "Let's
18 have a summit and let's get them all there." And then we'll
19 have a (inaudible) dance, and then that will seal the fact
20 that, "Oh, okay, great, we outreached to the communities of
21 color." I see this over and over again. Oftentimes, you
22 know, (inaudible) not there at the table, at the very
23 beginning. So now it's like way over here. People are
24 looking around and are like, "Where are the people of
25 color?" you know, "We need them here. It makes our table

1 look better -- look better," and it's just not effective.
2 If it were effective, we -- Sili and I wouldn't be so pissed
3 and go drinking and complaining about (inaudible), you know.
4 Like -- but it's not.

5 If it were working, we'd be great. We could focus on
6 other things but it's not, and so we have to do something.
7 We have to shift the paradigms. We have to raise the voice
8 of communities of color. We have to get the people who are
9 doing advocacy and policy work to kind of recognize what
10 their role is and what their role really should be, to be
11 providing support. Because the people most impacted by
12 education inequity really need to be the ones leading the
13 work and that's not happening.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible), could you mention Rainier
15 Corps?

16 LE: Oh, Rainier Valley Corps?

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

18 LE: Sure. That's a different policy I'm working on.
19 Rainier Valley Corps is really about the pipeline of leaders
20 of color, because we don't see leaders of color, you know,
21 at the advocacy table or the policy table. Everyone --
22 homelessness, housing, everyone is trying to move systems
23 and policy, but there's just very few leaders of color being
24 involved. And it's because leaders -- you know, leaders of
25 color do not go into the field. They don't because it

1 doesn't pay well, it's very stressful, our families think
2 that we're insane if we go into this work. And then we have
3 programs like AmeriCorps, but it doesn't tend to attract
4 communities of color. And so we're trying to build
5 something similar to AmeriCorps, but it's really a pipeline
6 for leaders of color from their own communities to go in and
7 develop (inaudible) of color. And then now we can get
8 involved with important things like being here in this room.

9 VALENZUELA: Thanks.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

11 BOCANEGRA: Well, unlike my fellow partners here, I -- we
12 don't do direct social services. El Comite is a grass-roots
13 organizing project that deals with the strength and people's
14 ability to defend themselves. We have -- we're dealing
15 basically with the whole issue of immigration, the
16 separation of families, the issue of people being deported.
17 We've hit two million already. You know, we can -- we can
18 have -- the President could be very proud of that and show
19 his right-wingers that he's doing a great job.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You're real supportive of him now
21 (inaudible), right?

22 BOCANEGRA: So one of the things that -- I mean, of all --
23 out of all of the communities I think the Mexicano/Latino
24 community is very diverse in this area. And then on top of
25 that we have native communities that have been transplanted

1 from Mexico, you know, communities as a whole. I was --
2 myself, I was surprised at the numbers of (inaudible) that
3 exist in the southern part of the county, which is one of
4 the interesting parts because, you know, we start talking
5 about diversity. Seattle's not diverse. Okay. It's
6 probably diverse in the south end, you know, and probably a
7 little bit on the north end, but it's not diverse. The city
8 is not diverse. It lacks the housing, it lacks the
9 transportation services and it lacks access to a lot of the
10 services that folks need in order to survive.

11 So most of the communities have moved over to the south
12 end. You can see -- you can go to Renton, you can go to
13 Tukwila, you can go to Federal Way and you'll see, you know,
14 the whole thing. I worked for the YMCA in Auburn. I used
15 to have a foster kid program down there. And in just a
16 short while the whole -- there's been a great transformation
17 in the past ten years of that whole area, you know, where
18 there's signs in Spanish, you know, translated -- sometimes
19 meetings are translated in three different languages. So
20 it's a very unique situation. On top of it, access to
21 service really means nothing to folks, you know.

22 So, I mean, I think one of the problems that we have right
23 now is that there's few services that some of the people
24 that are undocumented can access or sometimes there's an
25 attitude by many of the state providers, not -- not the

1 state as a whole, but individuals that have a concept, a
2 preconceived concept of folks that they're trying to rip
3 them off, that they're trying to take away resources from
4 the community, and it becomes a real difficult situation.
5 Sometimes prenatal services, you know, dental, health care
6 is going to be real critical because they're not included in
7 the so-called ObamaCare. You know, as recipients of health
8 services (inaudible) purchase insurance, unlike, you know,
9 everybody else, which is really a interesting situation
10 itself. Apartheid at its best.

11 And so, you know, we -- I don't really -- I worked in the
12 social service industry for years. I've been here for 45
13 years with this city. I've worked with homelessness. I've
14 worked on the issue of Latinos, you know, and helped found
15 the El Centro de la Raza. I helped create the first Latino
16 clinic here. And all throughout the years, you know, I
17 found that it was necessary to really organize the people.
18 We used the human services programs to organize folks,
19 and -- but there was something lacking because we had to
20 provide services, right? So you always ended up doing a
21 half-assed job. You couldn't really organize people because
22 your focus was not organizing. It was providing fish, you
23 know, so that they could eat instead of helping them learn
24 how to fish, right?

25 So one of the things that we've done with El Comite, we

1 have -- the biggest single most problem that we've had is
2 with law enforcement in the Algona area. In that area, they
3 were arresting people like crazy. We stopped the local
4 sheriff there or local police chief, put him on his head.
5 And we worked on the horse racing at Emerald Downs, where
6 they have about 200 workers in the back- -- what they call
7 the "backyard." And all those workers are all -- mostly
8 Mexicano, you know, and everybody knows it. The State knows
9 it. Everybody, you know. But everybody looks the other way
10 as long as they can rip off the labor of the community.

11 So one of the things that we ended up doing is basically
12 showing folks how they can organize and how they can stop
13 the process of oppression. And the only way people can stop
14 the process of oppression is by not cooperating with
15 (inaudible). By basically not working, you know. Because
16 that's all we have is our labor and that's all they want is
17 our labor. So that is also -- you know, it's been a process
18 of learning.

19 We've had -- one of the most impressive pieces of work by
20 undocumented workers was the hunger strike in the jail
21 detention center in Tacoma. And it's really enlightened a
22 lot of folks about what they're capable of doing. There's a
23 guy there that's been on a hunger strike now for 23 days
24 now, and he's still going strong. So, you know, those are
25 the real heros for us.

1 I personally do a lot of support for a lot of the folks
2 when they're organizing, getting them permits for
3 demonstrations, providing -- trying to get resources from
4 the unions, from organizations, so that we can do our May
5 1st march, for example. You know, we try to move the
6 envelope, push the envelope on the issue of immigration,
7 because that's probably one of the biggest problems that
8 this country is facing, you know.

9 There's about 11 to 16 million, we don't know exactly how
10 many people around here, and that whole population, you
11 know, the children of this population is going to grow up
12 with a real bad attitude toward the United States and the
13 United States government for all the torment and horrible
14 situations that their parents are facing, you know.

15 So I think it behooves us to try and find a way to
16 accommodate folks, especially government officials to not be
17 so, you know, forceful in terms of providing services, and
18 some of these communities really don't need very much
19 services. What they need is jobs, you know. A lot of folks
20 say, you know, "I don't want you to give me housing. I
21 don't want you to give me food. Give me a job. I can
22 provide for myself," you know. So that's one of the things
23 that has always been very impressive to me in working with
24 the homeless community is, you know, a large section of the
25 homeless community actually works. They hold down jobs,

1 whether it's part-time or three-quarter time, you know, they
2 do that. In working with them, I realized that providing
3 them with services was kind of a slow, slow process of
4 holding them back in a lot of ways. So we chose -- I
5 personally chose the route of trying to organize folks and
6 empowering people so that they can resolve their own issues.

7 VALENZUELA: Thanks, (inaudible).

8 Mohamed Sheikh, now you're at the City of Seattle, but --
9 and with a new mayor, but you also before that were doing a
10 lot of community work --

11 SHEIKH HASSAN: Right.

12 VALENZUELA: -- within the refugee populations.

13 SHEIKH HASSAN: My name is Mohamed Sheikh Hassan and I am
14 a father of six. I came here in 1994 and four of my
15 children graduated from the UW. One is an engineer at
16 Boeing 777. In fact, she's (inaudible). One is (inaudible)
17 and she's taken now her grad -- she's in grad school. And
18 the two other, one goes to (inaudible) and the other one
19 goes into social work.

20 The reason I'm saying that is if you give a chance to the
21 people, it can be well -- a source of human (inaudible)
22 society. I mean, we are refugees. I came here as a
23 refugee. Basically, I came with nothing, but I had come
24 with my education. And my wife and I are both educated, so
25 we had an opportunity to guide our children the right way.

1 I mean -- well, unlike the other people, they didn't have
2 that opportunity (inaudible). So now, what's important?
3 What's important is how can we give them that chance and how
4 can we give them the opportunity that we had. And more
5 often, most of my life, when I was here for 20 days, I
6 became -- back home I was -- my family was in finance. I
7 worked for the (inaudible) of Somalia as a chief accountant.
8 I worked for the World Bank as a financial (inaudible). I
9 worked for Halliburton (inaudible) for three years as a
10 senior accountant. Coming to this country, when I was here
11 for 20 days, I became a financial specialist for DSHS. I
12 didn't last in that job for long, because what I see myself
13 is a lot of (inaudible) are coming from East Africa,
14 especially the area of Somalia and the social service aspect
15 was not there, so I had to quit my job and look for a better
16 job that can help my community.

17 So I was a case manager, I was a job counselor, I was a
18 job developer. So that tells me I'll get the client when
19 they come first in the country. So I'm going -- we're going
20 to assess their needs. And you'll see people who have been
21 (inaudible) 15 years in the refugee camp. Basically, this
22 is their first time coming to this country with a lot of
23 children, eight, nine, ten. Being a father of six, I -- my
24 community calls me a minority because I have only six kids.
25 My (inaudible) have more than that. Because my mom calls me

1 and says -- whenever I call her back home, she says, "Is
2 your wife pregnant?" Because this is the culture and this
3 is the norm. And it's not surprising because that's the
4 life. And the reason being is the children are their
5 (inaudible), their Social Security, their 401(k).

6 When they retire, it's upon each and every family member
7 to support their families. We can't abandon them and put
8 them in the home cares (inaudible). So -- and where they
9 come from is they have (inaudible) anticipate that three or
10 four would perish during (inaudible). So you have high
11 numbers always to be on the safe side.

12 Now, coming to this country's tough. Raising children is
13 really, really the most difficult of place to do it in this
14 country. So with all those children with no education,
15 cultural, linguistic, and every aspect of it, they get a lot
16 of (inaudible), not to mention the trauma that they have
17 encountered during the civil war. Coming to this country it
18 gives them more. Guess what happens? When they come here
19 to this country, they basically (inaudible) that have been
20 set long ago. If you are an immigrant, in order to get the
21 public assistance, DSHS, which it's horrible because a
22 family of eight will only get \$782 cash a month. A family
23 of eight, we talk about needs four or five bedrooms. How
24 will they do that? Basically, they won't able to do that.
25 They will end up being homeless, and they will (inaudible)

1 become homeless.

2 Low-income housing is the dream of the immigrants, because
3 that saves them from being out on the streets. Now, that
4 saves them and the children to be in a far worse place than
5 that.

6 Now, they're getting food stamps on top of that. Now,
7 that together alone doesn't allow them to do it. They have
8 to do 23 hours of job-seeking activity if you are receiving
9 a dollar from DSHS. And 12 hours of job search (inaudible).
10 They are doing job-search activity without (inaudible)
11 communication. They can't even fill out their forms. They
12 are going to school. Chalk has been provided. So all that
13 and they have a limit of five years. After five years,
14 whether you are capable or not, you have been cut off
15 (inaudible). So -- and (inaudible), we are growing and the
16 number again is (inaudible). This year alone we're
17 expecting to (inaudible) 3,000 -- 3,000 immigrants from
18 Africa this year alone.

19 And in the coming three years, there are 50,000 that have
20 already been approved coming down the pipeline. And you can
21 see Seattle and King County, the housing is quite
22 tremendous. And the reason being the houses are full is
23 those coming, the government didn't have a good plan with
24 them and because they are given \$700 for eight people and
25 they cannot afford the rent. So basically they have to go

1 to shelters, transitional housing. And finally they get the
2 housing and they will never leave the rest of their lives.
3 Because if they go out, they cannot afford it.

4 So the reason being I was a part of it is because this is
5 the only thing (inaudible). I used to be (inaudible) for a
6 food service non-profit organization in South Seattle,
7 Rainier and (inaudible). I worked closely with (inaudible).
8 We have (inaudible) immigrants. And the communication part
9 is (inaudible). And so many aspects of are quite -- I can't
10 say (inaudible), but people don't have a voice. And the
11 decisions that (inaudible) in their life have already been
12 (inaudible). And basically, you will get the final product
13 whether you like it or not, whether it serves a purpose or
14 not. More often, they can't even remember that out of the
15 (inaudible) grant from federal (inaudible) communities to do
16 healthy eating (inaudible). But that communication does not
17 work for that community. If they had come and consult with
18 us, it's much easier. They probably spend less money to the
19 service that they are providing and they could move a better
20 service (inaudible).

21 So with that being said, the other (inaudible) King County
22 is growing and the communities are growing all over King
23 County. But if you do the survey, the immigrant (inaudible)
24 community, (inaudible) King County, only (inaudible) provide
25 housing services for low-income housing. No other services

1 that King County provides knows about it. In terms of --
2 without that knowledge, how will you be able to serve your
3 people? In so many different (inaudible) in terms of
4 communication and in terms of engagement and in terms of
5 health issues (inaudible). So I think that's the
6 intervention.

7 I was a commissioner before I was hired (inaudible). I
8 was a refugee immigrant commissioner, which is a very good
9 important thing that (inaudible). The City of Seattle
10 created that commissioner and it meant a lot to the
11 community, because that was the bridge between the immigrant
12 refugees and the City. Because they are represented from
13 that community to come here as a commissioner advising the
14 City (inaudible) the best way to serve it.

15 So that (inaudible) I think within our immigrant and
16 refugee (inaudible), I remember nine people are hired from
17 that commission to city departments. I mean, when I was
18 serving, now we had the two (inaudible) serving the
19 community was hired by the City. Why are they doing that?
20 Because they have seen firsthand what they can contribute
21 and what they can bring. And this group, these folks are
22 presenting in their communities and they're bringing the
23 issues to the City.

24 So the dream is, King County to have the same commissioner
25 (inaudible), because it serves a multipurpose because of all

1 aspects.

2 VALENZUELA: Great. Thank you.

3 So this is an opportunity -- I mean, our group is tasked
4 with seeing, okay, how can we improve services, outreach and
5 even (inaudible) --

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

7 VALENZUELA: -- empower and other things that we can do in
8 terms of working with limited English-proficient populations
9 and communities in the county. So this is an opportunity
10 for actually you to tell us what you think we should be
11 doing. So that's really the question: What do you think?
12 And you can each -- whoever wants to start, we'll make sure
13 you each have a chance to speak.

14 What do you think the County should be doing and how
15 should we be better serving limited English-proficient
16 populations, better supporting them while better helping
17 build capacity? All the things that you guys have been
18 talking about. What do you think are the top maybe, you
19 know, two things that we could do? And we can include --
20 and also part of it is being also practical in a sense that
21 we have to work on a proviso and come up with very specific
22 recommendations that we want to bring forward. So, you
23 know, any specifics, too, I think would help our group move
24 forward.

25 SAVUSA: So I'll start since I started last time.

1 VALENZUELA: Okay.

2 SAVUSA: So one of the things that I wanted to talk about
3 and share with you guys is one of the -- a great way is to
4 collaborate with other departments within King County. You
5 guys are so (inaudible), you know, and finding out -- you
6 know, the right hand figuring out what the left hand is
7 doing within the county system. You know, just doing -- we
8 just did a community event and knowing that we had to go
9 somewhere else for permits and somewhere else for signage,
10 and you guys are in the freakin' same office. And so it's
11 those kind of things. If we could work across -- if you
12 guys could figure out cross-programs, you know, where is it
13 that your program actually touches the community and we
14 could start from there.

15 And the one thing I wanted to share with you, the CDA is
16 in partnership on this grant from the Department of
17 Education. This actually began through OneAmerica. There's
18 multiple organizations. So there's OneAmerica, the CD --
19 White Center CDA, the library system, Housing Authority, the
20 Y, court jobs. And it's all -- it's NINA. I don't know if
21 you guys have heard of the -- why, thank you. I don't know
22 if you guys have heard of NINA. So NINA is the acronym for
23 New Immigrants -- Networks for Immigrating -- for
24 Integrating New Americans. So it is pulling together all
25 these collaborators, really, to look at civic engagement,

1 linguistic and economic opportunities for communities.

2 And, you know, it's kind of playing out the collective
3 impact theme, which drives me crazy sometimes when I hear
4 that term now, but it is -- it's really working within
5 those -- looking at the models that are out there for here.
6 The only one that comes to the top of my head is the Road
7 Map Project, which -- and it's not perfect by any means, but
8 here's -- you know, it's seven school districts.

9 So what is the County doing with the school districts?
10 What are the relationships that currently exist within the
11 school districts that King County is working in around the
12 equity work that will help to inform and get at these issues
13 around education, you know, immigration? And who -- what
14 are those programs that are specific to the County that you
15 know are happening as part of the initiative? And so I
16 think that's one of the best (inaudible). I just wanted to
17 throw that out there. There's lots of -- you know, we get
18 approached a lot about, "Okay, we're going to start this
19 initiative. The County is going to do this new initiative."
20 It's like, "All right. Here we go." And -- but to -- I
21 really appreciate that there has been a thoughtful
22 conversation within the County and local government around
23 how we're going to approach an issue like jobs and
24 immigration.

25 That we could sense the -- the -- what's the word? The

1 genuineness in a conversation where there's been other parts
2 of the silo in part of the planning and especially if
3 there's residents and community leaders that have helped to
4 orchestrate and kind of put the model together.

5 LE: I have 18 things that I wrote down, (inaudible)
6 Matias said two. So let me see. I don't know. I want to
7 start with a disclaimer that I (inaudible) work with
8 Seattle, and I try to sound very smart, but, you know, I
9 don't know everything. And I usually (inaudible) see any,
10 so (inaudible) --

11 (Inaudible colloquy)

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The City of Seattle has larger
13 funds.

14 (Inaudible colloquy)

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: See how it is out here in the
16 community.

17 LE: I don't know. I mean, there's very specific things
18 we can talk about, you know, in terms of outreach and et
19 cetera. But I think what I really encourage people to think
20 about is just shifting the whole paradigm of engaging
21 communities of color in the first place. You know, we talk
22 about (inaudible). Most of us are in this sort of cycle
23 where, you know, we -- you know, (inaudible) talks about
24 let's bargain with people, let's bring them on for stuff.
25 And there's just such a lack of trust for doing that, you

1 know, and there's a lack -- it's like, "We don't trust the
2 communities of color. They're small. They don't have the
3 capacity. We can't invest in them." You know, this happens
4 a lot in Seattle.

5 So what happens? People start investing in major things.
6 "Let's invest in the YMCA. They -- they'll end up figuring
7 out how to engage the communities of color." And then
8 they'll subcontract with us down on the ground, because
9 sometimes they cannot reach the communities of color. So
10 then they're like, "Vu, can you -- you know, can you help us
11 with this work?" I don't want to single out the YMCA,
12 because there's a whole bunch of major -- major
13 well-established organizations and this seems to be the
14 model. It's like, "Oh, if (inaudible) don't have any
15 capacity, let's give it to someone who does have the
16 capacity. Oh, they don't have any relationship with the
17 communities of color, let's engage the organizations that
18 (inaudible) communities of color and then let's pay them
19 nothing."

20 And then you're wondering why they don't build
21 (inaudible), because there's no funding. It's like, "Let's
22 not hire this (inaudible) because he has no experience."
23 It's ridiculous. That sort of paradigm is absolutely awful.

24 And then I see things like -- I see so many organizations
25 that are addressing needs of the communities of color and

1 then you look at them and there's just no people of color on
2 staff, or maybe one. And then, you know, I ask them, you
3 know, "What's going on? You are -- you're addressing things
4 that are most -- you know, 95 percent of your clients are
5 communities of color, so why don't you have any staff of
6 color on board? Don't you find that something is
7 fundamentally wrong with that?" And they always say, "Well,
8 you know, we don't know how to outreach to people." And we
9 asked, "How do you" -- you know, "We just (inaudible) the
10 people we know." I was like, "Who do you know?" I mean,
11 "You just -- you know the same people, right? I know other
12 Vegans and really well-dressed people who shop at Ross Dress
13 For Less," right? That doesn't mean that that's
14 representative of the people you (inaudible).

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right.

16 LE: And then, too, it's like, "Well, we didn't get anyone
17 who was qualified. And we had some really passionate
18 people, but they didn't have the experience." And, I don't
19 know, my philosophy has always been, you know, you hire for
20 the passion and the commitment and then you teach people to
21 get the skills. You cannot teach someone to be a person of
22 color. Okay. I tried. It doesn't work. Okay.

23 So you've got to hire the people and invest in them in the
24 long-term, because you couldn't -- and this is why -- like,
25 it's very disturbing when we have so many education policy

1 organizations and they are addressing the opportunity to
2 change the (inaudible), and then you just look on their
3 website and there's just no diversity there. And I find it
4 to be not just disturbing, but I think detrimental to the
5 work, you know. And it's because they have this kind of
6 paradigm of: We need to hire the most qualified people.
7 And, you know, qualified in the short run, sure, but in the
8 long-term you're not going to get the people you need to do
9 the work. And it's going to take momentum, you know,
10 building a movement, not just moving one thing at a time.
11 It's -- you know, it has to be like the whole -- the
12 collective impact thing, it drives me nuts, because everyone
13 is like -- every once in a while funders get these shiny
14 objects sent to them, right? "Oh, what's this shiny -- the
15 newest shiniest thing? Let's support that." And there for
16 a while it's, I don't know, evidence-based practice, and
17 then it was whatever, and now it's practice-based evidence,
18 you know.

19 (Inaudible colloquy)

20 LE: But like the ongoing thing that's always constant and
21 that is that communities of color are not being reached, the
22 paradigms that we have are not reaching, are not working,
23 and we're not willing to shift them, right? Let's keep
24 funding these (inaudible) organizations. What do they do?
25 They have these giant summits. Every week I get invited to

1 a summit, and Sili and Mohamed, too. It's like, "Can you
2 come to the summit? We're going to ask people to come.
3 We're going to have these UN-style headsets and we're going
4 to translate stuff and it's going to be, like, awesome.
5 We're going to have -- we're going to hire Kenny Loggins to
6 sing Kumbaya." It's like what the F? You know, like, we're
7 so sick of it, because at the end of it nothing happens.
8 Nothing happens. And it just destroys morale in the
9 community. And this is what we think of as collective
10 impact.

11 And when we talk to educators and we talk to our students
12 on the ground, they don't give a crap about collective
13 impact at this point. They just want to know, "Can I get a
14 breakfast in the morning?" And the educator's like, "Can I
15 have school supplies?" Because the ones that are so poor,
16 their PTSA have a budget of \$2,000 a year and they have a
17 bake sale that could raise \$250, and they spend, you know,
18 hours doing this. And if you ask them what they need, it's
19 not collective impact. It's just, "Can you give me \$100 so
20 I can buy pencils for my kids because they can't afford it,"
21 you know. We have a huge morale problem down there and
22 everyone's talking about all these major (inaudible) policy
23 and all this stuff. We should do these things, but we need
24 to be there down on the ground, too.

25 BOCANEGRA: Well, you know, I think it's really unfair to

1 talk bad about human services, but, you know, I haven't
2 (inaudible) worked for so many years. But, you know, King
3 County has probably one of the best services in many areas,
4 in many counties that I've seen. Yakima County, take Yakima
5 County, for example, when it comes to people of color, even
6 there the County has passed legislation, which basically
7 tells its employees that they are not supposed to ask people
8 for documentation and that -- you know, that is -- was a
9 great effort on the part of the communities and, you know,
10 it's one of the things that was needed.

11 But right now what people are facing is the demand by
12 private companies for I-9s in order for them to get
13 employment. So, you know, right now what we're doing in --
14 what we're going to be doing in the city is try to pass a
15 resolution asking -- not asking but demanding that Obama
16 defer action on deportations and provide people with work
17 permits and the permit to leave the country and go back to
18 their -- go visit their relatives who they haven't seen in
19 15, 20 years, and maybe some even more, since the last --
20 since 1986, when some of the people couldn't -- weren't able
21 to able to get in to register or become immigrants, or
22 registered immigrants in the country.

23 But, you know, given all that, all the problems that the
24 community faces, the issue of education in Auburn and in the
25 Kent area, the community faces problems with the law

1 enforcement folks up there, they face problems with the
2 school district, you know, they face all kinds of problems
3 with employment, problems with access to health care. So,
4 you know, it's really -- it's hard to grab -- everybody is,
5 you know, trying to grab this elephant, you know, because
6 it's really a big, big thing.

7 What I'd like to do is hear from you guys. What is it
8 that you see, that you need that we can -- that I can
9 provide? Because, I mean, I can talk about, you know, all
10 the stuff that happens in the community until I -- you know,
11 until you get tired of me, and I don't want to do that.
12 I -- you know, I'd like to hear from you guys. What -- what
13 are the things that you see or don't see? And maybe we can
14 help clarify that or I -- at least I would like to do that.
15 You know, it's really difficult to just talk, you know. And
16 so --

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Maybe I can start, because I feel
18 like we're kind of talking past each other, so I
19 (inaudible). So I work for the county council. I think the
20 last couple budget processes it's been increasingly clear to
21 the councilmembers -- and this is not going to be news to
22 you, you've probably known it since you've been working in
23 this field -- but that our systems are fundamentally racist
24 and treat communities of color, yours and every other one
25 out there, particularly shitty. And at least some of it is

1 because we don't make any real effort as a county to
2 communicate with you and your communities in the languages
3 that they actually speak. So that's actually where this
4 work came from, and I think it would be helpful to me to go
5 back to them with some ideas on -- kind of in the fields
6 that we play in. You know, for better or worse, we don't do
7 a lot in the educational field. It might really be
8 necessary, but we're not allowed to play in that sandbox or,
9 you know, in law enforcement. We have our sheriff's office
10 and our sheriff's office is the police for some cities, but,
11 you know --

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right. Because you mandate --

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- (inaudible). So those are
14 horrible. I grew up in (inaudible), Michigan and I'm really
15 familiar with the (inaudible). So, you know, I come from an
16 area where Seattle police look good, you know. So that's --
17 I mean, so that's the concept that I'm coming to and from.
18 But elections and the criminal justice system itself, public
19 defense, the courts, these are areas where I think it's
20 really interesting and where the county council really wants
21 your help. And I'm -- you know, all these people --
22 everybody here except me works for either the executive or
23 for the courts, and so it would be really helpful for them
24 to hear where are we really screwing up the worst and can we
25 screw up less and some concrete examples of what that might

1 be. That was a really long answer to your question
2 (inaudible).

3 BOCANEGRA: Anybody else?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: One of the things I think we as a
5 white person struggle with is that with many communities
6 there -- there are many, many different centers of
7 leadership within the communities. And so when we have a
8 limited resource to connect, we kind of go to those we know.
9 And, for example, here you are, but there are very many
10 subgroups within that. There's different chiefs within the
11 Pacific Island community. There are different segments
12 within the Vietnamese, between whether you're pro-Communist
13 or you're trying to come to terms with it. East Africans,
14 there's several different -- and so it gets so complex
15 because there are so many different subgroups and we're
16 afraid we'll step on one toe by going with one. So your
17 advice for how to get past that would be my question.

18 BOCANEGRA: Well, you know, on the first one, let me see
19 if I can take a shot at what you were saying. One of the
20 things that I -- that I constantly see is the lack of
21 (inaudible), you know. And I think that that's one way
22 where -- it would be prior to the budget period if people
23 are brought into like a symposium or to look at the
24 different aspects of government. The people are negligent
25 when they come into this country of what this monster is,

1 this -- you know, this very technical, very -- you know,
2 very rigid process that people enter. And you can't bribe
3 them, you can't -- well, you can, but, you know, it's not
4 Chicago here. Seattle is different. But, you know, there
5 are a number of things that can be done prior to that, you
6 know, but you need to -- the County would have to put in
7 some resources. Because like Allen said, there are very
8 diverse communities even within the communities of color,
9 you know, and so trying to -- trying to put those resources
10 out there for folks, not in the direct services but in the
11 organizing part, is really important, you know. And it
12 becomes -- it becomes more important for you if that is
13 looked upon as a tool, you know.

14 I think my biggest experience -- my -- my -- the thing --
15 where I've been most successful for me has been in trying to
16 bring communities together to solve their own problems, and
17 if we and the government and the people in government could
18 solve the problems. You know, it's amazing the amount of
19 ingenuity and intellect that's in the community to help
20 resolve issues.

21 One of -- like, for example, in the Health Department, my
22 wife works as a Public Health nurse, as well as my
23 sister-in-law, as well as my daughter, but she doesn't work
24 in the Public Health Department, but one of the problems
25 that they see is like, you know, the ex- -- reaching out to

1 people, being able to contact them and talk -- and have them
2 be able to understand what the health system is in the
3 county and how it functions and what kind of services are
4 being provided. You know, those are things that people --
5 everybody could come together and try to resolve, some --
6 bridge those things. Because much of this stuff, you don't
7 need resources too much in terms of communications, access
8 to the newspapers in the Latino community and all the
9 other -- and the Asian community, you know, access to the
10 radio stations where people can go and do public
11 announcements and services, you know, those kinds of things.
12 So that would be my recommendation, you know.

13 And I don't know what kind of resources the County has,
14 but I think that there is -- there is maybe a need for the
15 next budget period to have that kind of approach. And that
16 could probably help out in some of the other areas, you
17 know, because language does become a real issue for folks,
18 but --

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You know, at least for the council,
20 I think there's really two questions from what you just
21 said. There's the what -- what do we actually need to do,
22 and then that's going to have a price tag, and then can we
23 afford it or can we afford not to do it, one of the two. I
24 think we're at the stage now where it would be really
25 helpful to understand what we need to be doing. Because I

1 don't think anybody really has a sense of what that is. If
2 it turns out what we need to be doing is so expensive
3 because there's so many different communities that we truly
4 can't find a way to make (inaudible), well, that's an
5 unfortunate decision but one that would have to be decided
6 later. I think it would be really helpful (inaudible) to
7 know what that program of outreach actually looks like so
8 that we can figure out what (inaudible). You know, it's one
9 of those things that it always sounds daunting until you
10 actually start writing it down on paper and then maybe it's
11 not.

12 BOCANEGRA: Yeah, it probably won't be --

13 VALENZUELA: You know, I want to just give a chance also
14 to Mohamed. If you could speak to and answer the question,
15 and then we'll open it up, because he didn't get a chance to
16 say his comments.

17 SHEIKH HASSAN: Oh, thank you. I would like to talk about
18 (inaudible). And one thing that we're (inaudible) was -- is
19 the human aspect of it. If you have a human aspect contact
20 as -- we'll say that -- I mean, the (inaudible) goes a lot
21 when you have one person who is from that community
22 (inaudible). I mean, it will help.

23 Think about the health. I mean, (inaudible) public
24 defenders (inaudible). More often the County always do
25 reaction for pandemics. My experience to those things are

1 the flu pandemic that happened, H1N1/swine flu was
2 (inaudible) community. And the reason being is a matter of
3 messaging. What happened is, as you all know, that the
4 swine is kind of (inaudible). So when it comes to a
5 community where it wasn't a hundred percent, we cannot eat,
6 we cannot associate, we cannot take anything to do with
7 pork.

8 So when that message went out saying, "This is the swine
9 and this is a (inaudible) substance," so there was
10 (inaudible) in the community. Nobody's going to take that
11 vaccine, don't get associated with it, don't get close to
12 that. Well, that could have been prevented if you guys had
13 somebody at least from that community to work in the
14 department. And we have (inaudible) qualified people
15 graduate and have all kind of degrees who are in the
16 community, basically, who can even start. So that -- if you
17 could bring that kind of people (inaudible). So everything
18 else is a reaction.

19 Well, you (inaudible) one part of the community. I mean,
20 all of us (inaudible) have to give up our (inaudible) and
21 (inaudible) and those kind of things, they have made that a
22 connection and they build a relationship with the community,
23 so (inaudible). Well, one thing is that actually in a short
24 span of time you have to outreach out and educate them.
25 (Inaudible) and then all of a sudden it dies and you'll be

1 given (inaudible) of \$2,000 to outreach to more than 40,000
2 community members in King County, which is really quite
3 absurd.

4 Now with that being said, if you (inaudible) this
5 community now, what will happen next year? There are more
6 refugees coming. So it doesn't have to be -- when things
7 happen (inaudible), it should be a sustained
8 outreach-building consensus. As I said, we could take a
9 census about how many people know about service that King
10 County provides, I think that would be very (inaudible).
11 Election, that's another big thing that we are (inaudible).
12 How do you do an election? How will you even become an
13 elected member if you haven't communicated to the civics
14 classes and learn the tests and exams that are needed? And
15 one thing that's (inaudible) too, but you have to do that.

16 Now, there are some (inaudible) community of some folks
17 who are collecting initial ballots. The ballots that they
18 put in the initiatives, people sign because they're
19 (inaudible) about (inaudible) say, "Can you sign for me?"
20 They didn't ask whether (inaudible) or not. So what happens
21 is a number of our community members who are (inaudible)
22 voters sign it and they don't want to get in trouble because
23 of a lack of the communication (inaudible) if you could
24 (inaudible).

25 If nothing else, immediate (inaudible) that you guys have

1 reached, now the King County (inaudible) was basically
2 running the program over and over and over. It doesn't make
3 any sense to a community. If you cannot give them a time
4 for (inaudible) to give them and spread the word about
5 education once in a month, you're (inaudible) for a month or
6 for all time. That could play a big role, because that in
7 itself, you can outreach thousands of communities. It's up
8 to them (inaudible). They were called. There's a lot of
9 instruction. You know the issues and you can message
10 automatically instead of printing millions of fliers
11 (inaudible).

12 Public defenders, we have a lot of issues about public
13 defenders. We know the public defenders are -- in fact,
14 their (inaudible), but they're given huge caseloads. What
15 happened to our communities, we really fear authority. The
16 police are authority. The principals are authority.
17 Anybody who works for the government is authority. So
18 whatever you tell them, you'll take -- more often, the
19 key -- in fact, public defenders, what they do is these
20 young teenagers who are (inaudible) stupid mistakes in their
21 life. This public defender, he has a lot of cases. He say,
22 "Okay, take this plea." They don't even understand what the
23 plea is. Basically, (inaudible) they take that plea and
24 they end up going to jail. They -- their lives are
25 (inaudible). And why? Because this defender is taking

1 shortcuts in order to close this case and get another one.

2 So -- and I think that could save a lot of money for the
3 County and everywhere else and the life this young children
4 and their futures. At least to have a better consultant --
5 better consultation with the community. And there are so
6 many things that we can really work with them before even
7 sending them to the courts. We can work with those kinds of
8 stuff.

9 (Inaudible) costs if nothing else works, because we don't
10 know how the system works. Nor can the people who come and
11 have interpretation, even the translation interpretation is
12 not quite (inaudible). Somebody tells me that you
13 (inaudible). So I think they understand the language, but
14 when it comes to the (inaudible) "Can't you help me? I
15 don't understand what that means."

16 So I think (inaudible) victims who are coming to the court
17 have no idea what they are going into. And lack of
18 education and outreach is (inaudible). So interpretation,
19 the language is the principle. Because if you have the
20 language capacity and if language (inaudible) for
21 everything. And I think the City of Seattle (inaudible).

22 Now, the City of Seattle's Office of Immigrant and Refugee
23 Affairs is really working to strengthen the language
24 (inaudible) and protocols, meaning that we're making
25 language accessibility and basic (inaudible). I mean, look

1 at the service that you're providing. How many languages do
2 you guys have? How many customer service people are
3 speaking other than English? I mean, who is calling? When
4 people call, who do they talk to? I mean, provide
5 interpretation translation materials and not outsourcing.
6 More often, the translators come back to us, "I'm a Somali.
7 I speak Somali. I speak Arabic." But when I see the
8 translation, it doesn't make any sense. And the thing is --
9 either it's -- you're outsourcing to a big organization or
10 big entity who will say, "I can't do that." But if you send
11 it to the community, it will cost you less and (inaudible)
12 translate it as it is. Because I was given (inaudible)
13 translation and I was told to check it. And I said, "This
14 is not Somali. I don't know what you (inaudible), but this
15 doesn't really make any sense." Because what happens is if
16 you translate that word to word, that does not make any
17 sense. But first you have to understand what you are
18 translating, and then based on the language you can
19 translate this. But more often, the translators are being
20 (inaudible), which doesn't make any sense at all.

21 So I think the City of Seattle and County can (inaudible)
22 different aspects. We can learn from each other. I mean,
23 the City of Seattle has more connection in the communities
24 than the County. I think it's (inaudible) everything that
25 goes immigrant and refugee communities. They have to

1 consult with this office and say, "How can we do that? How
2 can we outreach? Who are the (inaudible)?" Now I'm doing
3 community mapping. I'm going out and calling on many
4 organizations. What (inaudible)? What are the capacity?
5 What kind of language do they speak? Who are the leaders
6 (inaudible)? Who are the leaders (inaudible)? What kind of
7 things? So we are doing that community mapping.

8 So when you know who you're serving and you know their
9 needs, even if their needs are diverse and a variety of
10 things, some (inaudible) capacity. Again, I want you to
11 (inaudible) that will -- another thing that you can partner
12 with the City of Seattle's Office of Immigrant and Refugee
13 Affairs. And, basically, all the workers in that office are
14 all immigrants and refugees. That office, everybody working
15 there, they are all immigrant and refugees and (inaudible)
16 different communities. So collectively we're putting
17 (inaudible) only at (inaudible).

18 When it comes to services, yes, the norm is the big
19 organization can serve better, which is not (inaudible).
20 It's true. I mean, we -- and we have learned that a long
21 time. For instance, now (inaudible) which is quite dramatic
22 for some of us. (Inaudible) input during the initial
23 (inaudible) --

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

25 SHEIKH HASSAN: -- but when it comes out, the language

1 that they have (inaudible) are totally what (inaudible),
2 totally. Automatically they disqualify any small
3 organization who have qualified for it. They disqualify
4 everything. So more often they -- to qual- -- to do a
5 service for your people, have you to qualify for it and you
6 have to put this legal binding document (inaudible) and why
7 you are qualified. I'm qualified because I'm serving my
8 people. I'm not getting paid, but I am serving day in and
9 day out, and I have the confidence and the trust of my
10 community, and I know the language and the way that I can
11 make them understand.

12 I'll say one more thing. The thing is I was a part of the
13 (inaudible). That was the thing. And I was the only
14 African and I was the only immigrant on that committee. And
15 I was told, "This is what you need to follow, Mohamed. The
16 census is confidential. The census is -- we are going to
17 get extra seats for the State and \$1800 will be allocated
18 from the federal government to the State if you participate
19 in the census." And (inaudible) to my community? How am I
20 going to tell this to my community, because this doesn't
21 make any sense for them?

22 When I said, "Extra seats for the State," they don't even
23 know what that is. They don't even know what the State and
24 the seats and (inaudible) is. I cannot tell them. When I
25 said \$1800, they anticipate that I'm going to pay them \$1800

1 each and I'm going to be in trouble. Confidentiality, well,
2 if you tell them to sign, they likely (inaudible) sign for
3 you because, as I said, it is the authority figure. They
4 fear the authority, whatever they say, and the reason being
5 is where they come from is the (inaudible) countries that
6 they cannot (inaudible) government. Whatever they say, they
7 will sign it.

8 So I think that can I do my own way of messaging in a much
9 better way than you guys do. "What are you going to tell
10 them?" I said, "Okay. My community are (inaudible)
11 community. If you (inaudible) housing, please come to
12 (inaudible) so we might get extra dollars for housing, for
13 shelter, for buses, lunch, and all that stuff. If you're a
14 providing childcare provider, you'll get something." So
15 those are the kind of language that they can understand and
16 they can respond to it, not the language that (inaudible).
17 And besides, I mean, the City and State spends thousands and
18 thousands of dollars (inaudible). Those people already have
19 the knowledge and understanding of that language and what
20 the value of the census is. You're going to send money to
21 those (inaudible) that will have no clue about the census in
22 order to outreach them.

23 So I think there are some other panel members, so...

24 VALENZUELA: In fact, Natasha, next question. And -- but
25 before you -- so you had something you wanted to say too,

1 correct?

2 SAVUSA: Yeah, so I just wanted to say really quickly,
3 kind of to answer your question, the big -- the big really
4 messy areas are I think, which you've pointed out, juvenile
5 justice and the sheriff's office. We've got some issues.
6 And not that we don't have allies, again, I'm trying to --
7 I'm trying to -- you know, for me, what's more important is
8 that the system gets straightened out.

9 So, for example, there's an accountability -- there's a
10 citizen review accountability thing that was supposed to be
11 put together. I was asked to be on it. I still haven't
12 gotten a call from the initial meeting of this group. So
13 I'm waiting because I know, you know, the police is a huge
14 issue with the Pacific Islanders and I'm sure across the
15 board. So I just wanted to say that too.

16 The other -- the other thing that you had said, the fact
17 to me that the County doesn't work closer with school
18 districts and education, is really you're doing a disservice
19 to communities. And if you think about communities, you
20 think, okay, access to affordable housing, safe streets,
21 strong schools. You guys should all be working together,
22 period. Figure it out. Mary Jean (phonetic) and her -- you
23 know, all her mucky-mucks are out there doing the education
24 piece and I'm telling her the same thing. We work with the
25 County and the cities to make sure that these districts are

1 kind of working together and changing the way that the
2 County looks at education. Many schools are hubs for the
3 communities that we represent, and we have strong
4 relationships with those principals and those
5 superintendents in these districts. So this whole work
6 around Race and Social Justice is meaningless if it's not
7 connected to education in those schools that are in these
8 communities.

9 And so (inaudible) around the other piece that the
10 County's involved with, but I don't see a lot of folks in
11 some of the conversations with the transit equity work
12 that's happening, the regional equity transit work, I don't
13 see none of you guys there. And again --

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When you say "none of you guys,"
15 what do you mean?

16 SAVUSA: Meaning most of the County departments --

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

18 SAVUSA: -- that I work with, I don't see any County
19 departments there other than funders and --

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Where? Where? Back up.

21 SAVUSA: At meetings that happen, these conversations that
22 are happening around the regional transit equity, it's
23 community-based organizations, it's community groups, it's
24 funders and PSRC. And actually -- so I'm thinking: Where
25 are the other players from the County around this regional

1 equity work, because the County has the Race and Social
2 Justice Initiative happening and it's supposed to be like,
3 you know, big.

4 So those are some areas I just wanted to throw out to you
5 guys that we are aware of in the community. And the other
6 thing that I wanted to say, we are grossly underserving
7 Native American populations. And they have -- as you see
8 the struggle with the organization work and the cuts to
9 funding, somebody's got to stand up and make an argument
10 within our county around services to Native Americans. So I
11 would love to see that.

12 And then the thing, too, around your guys's work, or in
13 LEP, just because it's LEP, it's everybody else. I mean,
14 they'll say, "Oh, well, we're just doing immigrant refugee
15 and, you know, non-English." No, this is everybody.
16 Communities of color as well. Because all the work that you
17 do collectively will be informed by the work of your
18 committee, the LEP work. It's going to inform everything
19 else, all the other communities that are English speaking,
20 like many Samoans, Native Americans and urban natives, we
21 need to figure out how we get the -- make sure that
22 everybody's on -- kind of on the table as we talk about your
23 work as a committee.

24 And so I just wanted to say that really quickly, that
25 those are some big issues as I heard you say. And, you

1 know, somebody -- we've got to -- you know, I want you
2 guys -- if you guys are sitting in a meeting -- and this
3 happens all the time within our institutions, we're sitting
4 in a meeting, we already had a meeting with a community-base
5 organization, and then we come back to our planning meetings
6 and our units and in our institution, our system here, and
7 then it's like you don't say anything. Just ask the
8 question, and, you know, you don't have to have a
9 relationship with every single cultural group that exists in
10 King County. I want you to have a relationship with one.

11 Find a real honest relationship where you can -- you know,
12 I can go down (inaudible) like, all right, your brothers and
13 sisters are driving me crazy. You need to go back down
14 there and tell Dow yadda yadda yadda. Allen has to be my
15 friend and understand why this is -- why -- you know, why
16 we're having a hard time in working with the County and some
17 County programs. I want him to really understand it from
18 here, not from here, from here. And, you know, this is --
19 this is ongoing.

20 And I think that we're in a rare situation in South King
21 County because Dow was just here and I've heard him talk on
22 several occasions about Race and Social Justice, but does --
23 do you mean it? This is why I wanted to push back to all of
24 you, does it really mean something to you? I mean, have we
25 really internalized the principles that you guys have

1 adopted as a county? that I'm very proud of, I might add.
2 But what does it really mean for the family new to this
3 country and is trying to enroll their child in school? What
4 does that really mean? And what is our part as a county and
5 working in a partnership with the other institutions that
6 are here? And so we know the history. We've seen it.
7 We've been a part of it. We're all -- you know, we're all
8 part of our systems that have been really screwed up and
9 generational, you know, misfortunes. And, you know, we know
10 what it looks like to be marginalized. We know that.

11 And so I'm just asking and urging all of you, you know,
12 just ask the question (inaudible), and I don't want to ask
13 that because we're so Seattle nice here in this region. We
14 don't want to hurt anybody's feelings. Forget that shit.
15 We've got to -- we've got to figure out how we're going to
16 have a real conversation, and you're not disrespecting
17 anybody if you're trying to speak truth to poverty and
18 racism. That's -- I'm not taking it out on you. We've
19 created a system.

20 When I look at all of you, you guys are my allies too. I
21 have to figure out how your guys's stuff is straight, you
22 know, for it really to be good. Is it going -- is it
23 going -- you know, are we going to be able to do this, you
24 know, in the next five years? Probably not. But at least
25 we've had these kinds of conversations, which we need to

1 continue to have, and really, you know, begin to tear down
2 the silos that really keep us separate from each other in
3 our work. Because I don't care if you're working in Yakima,
4 in a district in Yakima or, you know, working right here at
5 the prison, you know, it's totally related. It is totally
6 related, because it's all part of our system that we all
7 feed into. And the worst things that I know that I did
8 for -- that I believe that we do to our children is we keep
9 putting them in this public school system that will
10 marginalize them and change them. It's the hardest thing we
11 do as people of color. All of us, not just people of color.
12 It's -- we're all -- this is being done to all of us.

13 So we just need to get past the --

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible). You've got a council
15 that is interested in fixing a problem. You've got an
16 executive who is here. You've got a room full of executive
17 staff. You've got the courts. You've got the prosecutor.
18 We're asking you for recommendations on things we should
19 fix, and I don't think five years is soon enough. If your
20 recommendation to us is King County should work better with
21 the school districts, it's not going to go anywhere.

22 We do a whole bunch of stuff, the school districts have
23 made it very clear: Get off our lawn. And there isn't
24 collective will for us to take on every school district in
25 King County. What can we do to make the things that we're

1 currently actively screwing up, as we sit here today, less
2 screwed up? And you're right, all this goes back to
3 education. But as powerful and as big as King County is, we
4 ain't going to change the education system.

5 VALENZUELA: And actually -- and I think we -- you are
6 right to an extent. I think also the County does do a lot
7 with the school districts, actually.

8 SAVUSA: Yeah.

9 VALENZUELA: So I just wanted to make sure, because you
10 put some pretty important words out there. And I want to --
11 I know you've had your hand up, Natasha, but I don't want to
12 change kind of the course of discussion. And I think --
13 were you going to comment and build on what Sili was saying?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I just wanted to pick up on the
15 themes that I've been hearing you say.

16 VALENZUELA: Yeah, exactly. So I don't want to kind of
17 switch the subject. I want to stay on this.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So I've heard that it's about
19 funding, it's about staffing, it's about consultation before
20 decisions are made, before a process is done. And what I
21 wrote down is like a feedback mechanism that helps
22 communities solve their own problems. I think we're often
23 coming to you with our agenda or our thinking, "Oh, we want
24 your feedback on this thing we have to do, give us your
25 feedback," and so it's a reactionary relationship.

1 And so I really would love your thoughts about what is
2 that feedback? What does that ongoing feedback mechanism
3 look like? One of the outcomes of the transit equity thing
4 is that Metro's in conversations with those organizations
5 trying to figure out what does that ongoing feedback look
6 like. Where you're coming to us with your agenda and we're
7 solving your problem as a transit agency as opposed to
8 coming to you with ours and saying, "Join us. Help us."

9 So what does that look like (inaudible) before the
10 budget --

11 VALENZUELA: Well, we all introduced ourselves before you
12 came in, so you might want to introduce yourself.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm Deanna (inaudible), Department
14 of Transportation, Roads and Metro --

15 SAVUSA: Yeah, okay. Okay. Good.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- (inaudible) public engagement
17 (inaudible) customer service, so...

18 SAVUSA: Okay. Got it.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So what is -- I would love to
20 hear what would that mech- -- if you were the county
21 executive, if you were any one of us in our agencies and you
22 wanted to design this ongoing feedback loop that we could
23 help you solve your problems, what does that look like?
24 What is that process?

25 BOCANEGRA: You know, my experience in working with

1 communities of color is to just go to them, you know.
2 There's some natural leadership in many of these communities
3 that you can root out to participate in some dialogue. You
4 know, it's not a very difficult process. It's just a matter
5 of sensitivity, you know, many times when you're trying to
6 provide them with access. Because people in general want to
7 help. They want to help resolve some of the problems that
8 their constituency is facing, so just being given the
9 opportunity.

10 And I -- I understand what you're saying, because many
11 times, you know, if you're looking from the outside in, you
12 can't tell what it is. Who's who in the zoo, you know. And
13 so maybe some of the people of color in the staff can help,
14 you know, direct your projects toward that -- toward that
15 constituency, or be able to root out folks out there, you
16 know, rather than, you know, being caught and trying to
17 figure this thing out by yourself.

18 And that -- and across departments, I don't think that
19 there's -- every department has such a diversity, but you
20 can -- I mean, if Dow is willing to promote this service,
21 then he would allow the departments to go and send
22 (inaudible), you know, "Hey, let me grab this guy who speaks
23 this language, and, you know, I need to have him look at
24 this." I mean, that kind of sharing of the expertise within
25 the County, you know. And there's white folks that really

1 understand how the communities work. It doesn't all have to
2 be people of color. I mean, we have to identify them, but,
3 you know, there are folks that do that kind of stuff.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So if you have an issue that comes
5 up in your community and you want to get some action from
6 the County on it, what is that input mechanism you would
7 like so that actually change happens --

8 BOCANEGRA: Oh, just get picket signs and (inaudible). I
9 don't know. You know, I mean, that's not -- that's when
10 it's extreme.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible) --

12 BOCANEGRA: Yeah.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- it's reactionary (inaudible) --

14 BOCANEGRA: That's reactionary. But I think one of the
15 processes is, you know, to kind of put people -- bring
16 people together so that they can understand what the -- the
17 process that they're going to be working through.

18 SAVUSA: And I wanted to -- yeah, I wanted to just
19 interject really quick. I have a great relationship with
20 Allen. So it could be anything that has nothing to do with
21 his office, I will call Allen. So that's just to impress
22 upon you that relationships mean everything.

23 So for me it's to look inside your system or your office
24 or your program, where are the opportunities for community
25 to build a relationship with you? Where are the places that

1 residents have a chance to touch your work?

2 So go ahead.

3 LE: The mechanism, maybe happy hour, you know. You're
4 happy. You can talk about stuff. All right. I mean, that
5 I'm kind of kidding about this. I mean, it's a very
6 complicated sort of issue --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But you don't want to come to more
8 summits (inaudible) --

9 LE: No, that's right.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- where you're --

11 LE: But that's --

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- for you to help us (inaudible)
13 things.

14 LE: Yeah, this is why -- this is why the issue is really
15 complicated. I mean, you're talking about all these
16 complexities within the communities that you're trying to
17 outreach to. You're right. I mean, there's like 18
18 different Vietnamese organizations, which one do you
19 approach, right? But I think what's really important, one,
20 is to have some staff to figure that out in the first place,
21 because everyone is trying to have this kind of silver
22 bullet. "Oh, if we just get this one organization that's
23 going (inaudible) our organization, great. We can touch
24 everyone." That doesn't work. It's the relationship
25 building. It takes forever. You're going to get yelled at

1 once in a while. You have to go to the temple and listen to
2 a lecture and all this stuff, you know. And people need to
3 understand that that sort of stuff takes a lot of time. And
4 the first few times you approach someone you're going to not
5 get any sort of leeway. That's because we are so used to
6 people leaving and people not doing anything.

7 And so, you know, if we see you only one time -- the only
8 time that we see you is when you have some sort of agenda,
9 and we're not going to build any sort of trust, right? It's
10 like if the only time I see you is when I'm asking for
11 something, like a cup of sugar, what kind of neighbor am I,
12 right? So being able to be out there.

13 Some of it's really simple. Like, the events that we put
14 on, attend them. It will cost you \$100, you know, but you
15 get some kick-ass food and you start building relationships
16 with some of these things that we've just put on. Once in a
17 while just attend them, because we don't see people, right?
18 And if you don't have the capacity, well, we have even less
19 capacity to invite you. So like, "Well, I (inaudible).
20 Well, no one invites me." Well, we don't have any staff to
21 go and invite you.

22 So I don't know what that mechanism is. I know that
23 Seattle -- like, Seattle City has the Office of Immigrant
24 and Refugee Affairs. They are new. They were established
25 last year. They have two staff, and even then they're still

1 trying to figure out what it is. And I think they're going
2 to do some analyses, do some research on what are the needs.
3 I really -- you know, maybe something like that might be
4 helpful for King County. At the same time I want to caution
5 you against falling into the Seattle process quagmire, which
6 is just -- we spend so much time analyzing data and stuff
7 that absolutely nothing gets done at the end, right? And
8 the data, the research seems to be the results, and then you
9 have this amazing, like, report that no one reads. So I
10 think it's really important to kind of figure that out, to
11 do something, even the small stuff, to build morale and
12 relationships.

13 VALENZUELA: Great. So Mohamed, and then next Natasha
14 after you.

15 SHEIKH HASSAN: I will follow with that. In fact, human
16 relationships go a long way. I mean, you can see this
17 panel. How did you get ahold of us? It's a simple thing.
18 How did Matias get to know us? It's that relationship that
19 goes a long way. (Inaudible) Robin goes to each and every
20 community and wherever she walks (inaudible) everybody's,
21 "Hey, Robin, how are you?" because she's there. She's
22 (inaudible) there. I mean, the human relationship goes a
23 long way. In fact, building that and -- can be a lot. Yes,
24 there's a difference, but (inaudible) the community
25 (inaudible) knows who are the leaders, who are the right

1 person who can send a message.

2 While sometimes one person then doesn't qualify to be a
3 leader in the community even though he's a Somali. I can be
4 a Somali on the count I'm a (inaudible), but nobody's going
5 to listen to what I say. And there might be one person
6 whenever you (inaudible) community. So you already have
7 wonderful people who are working with the communities, and
8 you have Matias and you have the (inaudible) and the health
9 departments (inaudible) population, the workers there, they
10 know us. They have worked with the community. They have
11 done a lot of things. And please get people from there.
12 Don't shut them down, because they have -- they are
13 wonderful people who are there knowing the (inaudible), and
14 the (inaudible) -- they trust -- they build a trust so that
15 they know the (inaudible) community is and they can bring
16 the right people on the table to do that. So the
17 (inaudible) is alive.

18 VALENZUELA: Well, thank you. I just wanted (inaudible)
19 after you was Natasha.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So I've got a (inaudible) want to
21 follow up on some of these (inaudible) questions. So just
22 so you know, internally we're struggling with building those
23 relationships as well. So I've heard that repeated, that we
24 have to build relationships, build relationships with and
25 use the people we have internally to extend those

1 relationships. We're not just siloing as departments, we're
2 siloed as individuals as well. And we've heard from some
3 folks who have those relationships say, "Well, I don't want
4 to put you in touch with that person because I spent a lot
5 of time building that relationship (inaudible)."

6 (Inaudible colloquy)

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So I recognize -- I think that -- I
8 love that you're telling us that (inaudible) continue to
9 build those relationships, but recognize that we're going to
10 screw it up sometimes and -- but, like you said, as long as
11 it's genuine, right?

12 BOCANEGRA: Right.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: As long as you're doing it in the
14 spirit of like trying to share and grow that relationship, I
15 think that's a positive and we'll continue to try to do
16 that.

17 Getting back to what you said about we need to have more
18 people of color, more immigrants, all of those folks on
19 staff, I would make a plea as community leaders, we have a
20 lot of jobs available at the County. And you mentioned
21 that, you know, a lot of people in your community that
22 are -- with degrees and that sort of thing --

23 SHEIKH HASSAN: Yes.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- so right now we're talking about
25 this proviso, which is due in the next few weeks, but we

1 also need to be looking like five, ten years down the line.
2 Because the staff, we talk about a lot internally. I don't
3 think the public knows it, but the average age of a county
4 employee is 57 years old.

5 VALENZUELA: Oh, wow.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We've got 13,500 employees, so over
7 the next 15 years, like a huge percentage, I mean, almost
8 (inaudible) of our staff will turn over. So we need people
9 to come and take those jobs and start getting in the
10 pipeline. But what you said does happen, where people say,
11 "We're looking for someone for this position. Well, I'm
12 going to ask the people that I know and they're going to ask
13 the people that they know. Oh, look, we've got people
14 (inaudible) job," right? So we want to get more people into
15 the pipeline.

16 So let your communities know and we'll try to (inaudible)
17 come available so that we can get more people of color in
18 the pipeline, because that's what I would like to see. You
19 know, we need to start training the next generation of folks
20 who do have a voice in the community and that background and
21 that understanding of community (inaudible) and not just the
22 people saying, "Who should I talk to in the community?"
23 They should know (inaudible) grew up in that community and
24 they know who the folks are and they know what it's like.

25 So my question is going back to the specifics around

1 messaging. The LEP proviso is asking us how we can do
2 messaging and outreach and that sort of thing better. As
3 someone who worked (inaudible) did communications before I
4 did customer service, so I was the one putting the ads in
5 the community papers and doing the -- you know, the programs
6 for the (inaudible) and that sort of thing. And we love
7 doing those, but we've got a really limited budget. So I
8 think one of our takeaways from this is we need more
9 money --

10 BOCANEGRA: Right.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- to do that to serve the
12 community, to help you build that capacity.

13 But around specific issues, you said the media, like the,
14 you know, different language media is a good outlet or a
15 good way of reaching, you know, a good conduit. Sometimes
16 their agenda is not the same as the community's agenda. I
17 can tell you it -- you know, we reach out to them with,
18 "Hey, we've got this issue. We'd like to hear from the
19 community on it," and their first question is, "How big of
20 an ad are you going to do?" Well, an ad is not a way to
21 foster communication (inaudible) with just an ad.

22 So how can we -- what's another way of reaching --
23 reaching out and getting input on issues that affect your
24 community? Like, no one really, quote/unquote, "reports" on
25 issues. So when Transit's doing something and they need to

1 hear from the community: What's the impact of this going to
2 be? Should we be doing this differently? You can write an
3 ad that says we're going to have a community meeting and
4 that sort of thing, but is there some other way of spending
5 that money or accessing, you know, people who should have a
6 seat at the table? Because we want to hear those voices,
7 but we're not always sure that given our timeline and the
8 meetings coming up and then we need to hear from people of
9 what's the best way to reach people. Because the TV
10 stations and some of the newspapers and those sort of
11 things, they just want to put a four-by-five ad, which is
12 all we can afford sometimes, in their paper, and they're not
13 going to follow up and see if it actually reached the
14 community or report on the issue, you know, in an actual
15 article, "This is what this is about, this is how you're
16 going to be impacted, this is what you need to be asking the
17 County about." Nobody really does that on behalf of the
18 communities of color.

19 SHEIKH HASSAN: Can I take on that? Okay.

20 (Inaudible) one part of it. When you look at (inaudible),
21 I'm glad that you say that you have a lot of (inaudible) in
22 the future coming. If you look at Boeing or Microsoft,
23 T-Mobile, (inaudible), they have more immigrants working for
24 them in (inaudible). And (inaudible) companies, they are
25 looking for talent. And they get the talent, and our kids

1 are working for them and many more. But it's unfortunate
2 that the County cannot get that. I think the talent is
3 there.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Why?

5 SHEIKH HASSAN: Well, that's the question that we need to
6 find out, because so many people applied to city government,
7 but still --

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

9 SHEIKH HASSAN: -- that's a very tough question. And they
10 have the qualification and the knowledge, but that's the
11 (inaudible). If you go to Boeing and look at the employees,
12 a high number of immigrants. If you go to Microsoft, a high
13 number of immigrants. If you go to T-Mobile, (inaudible)
14 every aspect of (inaudible) accounting, engineering,
15 management, you name it. When you come to the city
16 government, it's limited. And that is -- the City has to --
17 so, I mean, the County has to improve that.

18 The budget, it's very important every department has to
19 put a budget -- prioritize about (inaudible). But there are
20 so many departments that are not serving the immigrants.
21 There's no one single department who are not serving
22 immigrants. Now, if you are serving those communities, you
23 have to prioritize, you have to (inaudible) budget in these
24 services (inaudible). The media I was talking about, it's
25 not a matter of ads. We need programs like (inaudible),

1 which was --

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Public Access.

3 SHEIKH HASSAN: -- Public Access. So all the ethnic
4 organizations are going there and have live television
5 shows. That they are attracting the community (inaudible)
6 some events. They're (inaudible) people will call in and
7 that (inaudible) 80 percent of Somali households, when the
8 program was on, they were rooted to the television because
9 somebody that they know, somebody (inaudible), somebody talk
10 about the issues are (inaudible). And what they used to do,
11 (inaudible) King County used to go there. (Inaudible)
12 people go there and do (inaudible) community for HIV, for
13 hepatitis, for all those things. That was very (inaudible).
14 I'm not taking about AIDS. I'm talking about the problems
15 like that. I thought that -- I mean, King County
16 (inaudible) media (inaudible) whether they do or not, but I
17 think that's the best -- that's the thing, that's the best
18 thing.

19 I'll let my fellow --

20 BOCANEGRA: You know, what -- one of the things that I've
21 been amazed with in the -- especially with -- specifically
22 in the undocumented community is the use of the social
23 networks, you know, and -- but there's -- there is no
24 participation of government, you know, even individuals
25 putting information or reaching out to some of those

1 networks, that would be very helpful. I mean, I think radio
2 is kind of, you know, difficult. I was doing an hour
3 program with another (inaudible) who was running a radio
4 program and most of the media within -- at least within the
5 Latino community, they're scarce of resources, you know, so
6 you have to either provide or develop the article for them
7 or you have to provide and develop the program for them,
8 because they just don't have the resources to accommodate.

9 But I think, you know, when people on the radio want to
10 put out some information, it's just to bombard them with,
11 you know, online services, which I found that people just
12 pick it up and read it because they lack the information
13 coming in to them. So they're grabbing from wherever the
14 information is coming from, with the County --

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: In their native languages?

16 BOCANEGRA: In their native language, Spanish or, you
17 know, whatever language is there. That's when I found it to
18 be really interesting that folks have taken off to this
19 electronic means of the communication like fish to water,
20 but, you know, it's like everybody, kids and all the elders,
21 everybody's just, you know, (inaudible).

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So who's the only Latino without a
23 Facebook?

24 BOCANEGRA: (Inaudible).

25 (Inaudible colloquy)

1 BOCANEGRA: So -- but we don't want to contact him anyway.

2 (Inaudible colloquy)

3 LE: Yeah, just going back to your (inaudible). I think,
4 really, this is matter of resources and priorities, you
5 know, and it gets very frustrating to us communities of
6 color when people -- you know, it's like you're trying --
7 you're trying to bake a cake and people of color are like --
8 like the eggs, they need to bind. Yeah, I'm a Vegan. I'm
9 actually (inaudible). I assume there's eggs, right? But
10 then people are like, "Okay, we're going to spend all our
11 money and now we have, like, only eight cents left to buy
12 the eggs, what are we going to do? We need to make this
13 amazing cake and it doesn't work." If cakes are important,
14 the eggs are important, you need to buy the eggs as part of
15 your main ingredients first, then you figure out the
16 toppings and other things, not the other way around. This
17 is what we see over and over. It's like, "Oh, education, we
18 need to (inaudible) community of color." Okay. Well, we've
19 bought all the other stuff that we need. We don't have
20 any -- any money left to hire staff of color or how -- or
21 providing funding to organizations of color to be involved
22 in this work. It's a backwards sort of model and it's not
23 effective.

24 Now, we see more organizations or more projects where, you
25 know, we (inaudible). Even like, you know, when I'm doing

1 the work with communities of color, I say, "Okay, we need to
2 build in \$25,000, that's \$5,000 per organization of color
3 just so they can send a staff to these meetings for, you
4 know, 50 hours," right? Because it's about \$100 an hour.
5 We're going to treat everyone like consultants here, because
6 that's what we have. We just have people being asked to do
7 stuff for free all the time. And we're glad to do that,
8 but, you know, it just -- it pushes our other work aside and
9 we get burnt out.

10 And, you know, support the organization, not the
11 individuals specifically, but the organization. Because
12 this is a matter of respecting the organization for their
13 skills and expertise so they can do the outreach work. If
14 we do that, we can all say, okay, well, we need five
15 organizations from these different language groups, we're
16 going to apply \$5,000 each to be involved with, you know,
17 these nine meetings. Then they'll be involved, because
18 you're paying them, you're respecting their time, and
19 they'll be there because we're paid to do that. I mean, our
20 organizations are paid to do that and they'll send us there
21 and it will build -- but, you know -- but now we don't -- I
22 think we see more and more of that, like the Multicultural
23 Community Center, something like that organization, and you
24 see them at the table, because if you respect their time and
25 you pay the organization for it, they'll do their work.

1 VALENZUELA: Absolutely, yeah, and then so that happens.
2 You know, I know I find myself a lot of times, you know,
3 okay, well, send something to the CDA if you want me to get
4 involved with this. And even around the strategic plan, I
5 remember I was talking to somebody, and I said, "You know,
6 so one of the ways that we get information around -- that we
7 did around the strategic plan was the parent-teacher coffee
8 hours at the schools." Again, these are advocates who have
9 relationships. You know, how much does it cost to throw a
10 damn pot of coffee out, you know, and get parents around to
11 talk about strategic planning?

12 And so these are easy ways, but, again, you know, to have
13 the capacity to do that and to pay for the coffee, but to
14 pay for staff time to coordinate that, I think it's really
15 thoughtful if you're willing to honor an organization's time
16 and that you have in your budget, you know, outreach
17 dollars.

18 And, you know, I think about the community, those \$5,000
19 grants that the County does for events, you know, something
20 along those lines, or if the County's about to enter into a
21 major initiative, you know, and having grants that
22 organizations can apply for, especially the ones that are
23 relevant to the work of that organization to build their
24 capacity, would be really great.

25 BOCANEGRA: You know, I'd like to -- the best networking

1 is done in the streets. So I want to invite everybody to
2 the May 1st march. You know, we're going to start at three
3 o'clock at St. Mary's Church and we're going to go down to
4 Westlake. And you can -- I mean, it's such a variety of
5 people showing up. You'll have a good time, and you'll be
6 able to make some friends and, you know, party a little bit
7 on the way, as long as the cops don't get nasty with us.

8 SAVUSA: Does the superintendent, does the Race and Social
9 Justice have an executive committee or an oversight
10 committee?

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So the City has Race and Social
12 Justice. The County has Equity and Social Justice, but it's
13 the same kind of work. And we do have an interbranch team,
14 which is made up of representatives of all the different
15 departments and separately elected to our -- trying to --

16 SAVUSA: So it's a highfalutin group?

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Not so highfalutin.

18 SAVUSA: Really? Okay.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Actually, there are a good number
20 of representatives that are here that are part of
21 (inaudible) --

22 (Inaudible colloquy)

23 SAVUSA: Oh, okay. All right.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Raise your hand if you're
25 (inaudible) --

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible) highfalutin.

2 (Inaudible colloquy)

3 SAVUSA: That's good to know.

4 (Inaudible colloquy)

5 VALENZUELA: So, yes, it's, yeah, very informative in
6 terms of that group's work as well.

7 SAVUSA: Okay. Good.

8 VALENZUELA: Yeah. One of the things -- we divide the
9 work into, really, policy decision-making and organization
10 practice and community engagements, so this -- it's very
11 timely as well.

12 SAVUSA: But the community engagement piece should be
13 driving everything. It should be driving the policy work
14 and the program development. Seriously, guys, I think -- I
15 know -- I know I'm speaking to the choir when I say this,
16 but the community piece really needs to drive the County's
17 work. And so the more -- and if you show the community that
18 you're serious about community engagement and resident
19 voice, then if you need that kind of backup for more money
20 in your budget, use the community to come out and advocate
21 and do a hearing. You can -- folks will line up for you if
22 they know that you have their backs. And so, again, that
23 relational piece.

24 VALENZUELA: Okay. We're going to have maybe (inaudible).
25 Hopefully it's okay, Christina. She's the big boss here.

1 Dow is here, but Christina's the big boss. We'll get
2 (inaudible) --

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible) respectful of the panel
4 tonight (inaudible) group has until five o'clock.

5 VALENZUELA: Yeah. So we're going to do one last question
6 and then we're going to wrap up.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible) and kind of
8 observations. Even though I've been taking a lot of notes,
9 I've been nodding my head a lot. So I've been responsible
10 for the County's strategic plan, the first one and this most
11 recent update, and I didn't work with any of your specific
12 organizations this time, but I'd have to say we did have
13 money and we did go to like ACRS and others to help
14 facilitate focus groups. And those experiences were very
15 rich and valuable experiences. It was probably the
16 highlight of the entire engagement process --

17 VALENZUELA: Nice.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- just for me personally, who is
19 stuck in my cube, you know, on my computer writing things
20 like plans that no one reads. The fact that people were
21 saying, "I'm really glad you asked me. I didn't know that
22 anyone cared about my opinion. This is really meaningful to
23 me." And, yeah, they were also wanting to know that we were
24 doing something with it. They weren't just, you know,
25 research subjects. But -- but there was a genuine exchange

1 of ideas and a lot of their issues are very similar to some
2 of the things you talked about today.

3 I will say the first time we did our -- we have a
4 statistically valid community survey that my group is also
5 responsible for and we asked about -- we put education on
6 there, and education was so far out and beyond all the
7 County services that we did. And the reason I had it
8 included was that I've seen other communities, Nashville is
9 the one that comes to my mind, where they also don't do the
10 education, but they oriented their message to the community
11 about the things that the City was doing to support
12 education. And that community survey really shows us if we
13 put more money into transit or roads, we're going to get
14 more community satisfaction than if we put it into animal
15 control. Sorry.

16 But, you know, certain things are more important to the
17 community than other things, and education was the most
18 important thing. So Matias's department does a lot about
19 immunizing children, and we do a lot about preventing
20 domestic violence. We do safety things. I mean, there's a
21 lot of things that we do around getting kids whole, safe,
22 you know. Now, we don't do anything in the classroom,
23 but -- and we also have not adopted a mentality that we are
24 around that key community goal that (inaudible).

25 Anyway, just the observation that we do have other

1 research saying this is the most important thing to the
2 community. The jail, yeah, it's important, but it's not as
3 important as education. You know, education, education,
4 education. So anyway, just an observation there.

5 I will also say that I struggle with the fact that the
6 County, to some points that have already been made, anything
7 to do with LEP is going to benefit the County, because I
8 feel like we don't actually have systematic ways of engaging
9 the 1.8 million people in the community (inaudible).

10 SAVUSA: Right. Right.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We don't have -- I mean, other than
12 Allen, I know, that's a lot of burden (inaudible).

13 (Inaudible colloquy)

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Other than people getting on the
15 phone to complain to Dow or the councilmembers as direct
16 issues, we don't have systematic ongoing ways of engaging.
17 And so the other side of our community outreach was we did
18 some public meetings and we got some of those meetings with
19 zero people. Zero. Not one person. Not one old cranky
20 guy. Zero people. So --

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We always get the old cranky guys.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I know.

23 (Inaudible colloquy)

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I guess what I'm saying is I feel
25 like our engage- -- our broader engagement work is really

1 needing a, you know, broader look. We did an online thing
2 that drew a lot of people. It was actually more diverse
3 than statically, but not good for people that don't speak
4 English --

5 SAVUSA: Right. Right.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- or don't have a computer. And
7 we partnered with other groups to give people online access.
8 But, again, you know, unusual budget, multifaceted. We did
9 buy media time. We bought Facebook ads. I mean, we spent
10 real money that -- I mean, I never get to do that. I mean,
11 that's the first -- I've been here 11 years and I've never
12 had that kind of money before. So that's not something that
13 I think we can rely on, but I think there are a lot of
14 lessons learned trying to get to some of these issues about
15 how do we align with the community better, how do we include
16 (inaudible).

17 But we did give grants to organizations and that was --
18 that was for, you know, respecting their time. I mean, it
19 was a lot of energy. Anyway, there was no question, but I'm
20 just trying to reconfirm and pick up on a lot of things that
21 you all had (inaudible).

22 VALENZUELA: Chris (inaudible)?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I wanted -- I just wanted to throw
24 my two cents in about Michael's question about what
25 (inaudible) better. I am submitting my vote (inaudible),

1 but just more opportunities for -- for those of us who are
2 working in our little silo cubicles to meaningfully and
3 genuinely engage with your population. I love your ideas of
4 (inaudible) to the events, and I think that we need to take
5 more of those opportunities and for there to be -- for you
6 all to invite us and for us to show up.

7 LE: May 1st. It's right around the corner.

8 (Inaudible colloquy)

9 VALENZUELA: I'm going to give each panel maybe time for
10 just one last comment. (Inaudible). I think you were ready
11 to say something.

12 LE: Oh, me?

13 VALENZUELA: Yeah.

14 LE: Sure. So (inaudible) if we're pitching our different
15 events here, World Dance Party is on April 25th.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What date? What date?

17 LE: April 25th, New Holly, 6 p.m., giant multicultural
18 dance party. I believe it's free. It's a potluck and
19 there's -- actually, there's no alcohol this time, but it
20 will still be fun.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What time?

22 LE: Six p.m. Six (inaudible) p.m. at New Holly Gathering
23 Hall --

24 SAVUSA: No fireball shots?

25 LE: -- and -- no, no. Sorry, Sili. I'll bring

1 (inaudible).

2 So, yeah, we'd love to see you there. It's free and you
3 just need to be there and it's fun.

4 The other thing I would just say is I know sometimes I and
5 also Sili, we tend to be combative when we're on panels.
6 We're just like -- we keep trying to drill down these
7 messages over and over. But I think -- I do want to
8 acknowledge that we really do appreciate the work that you
9 are doing, because we -- I don't think anyone is trying to
10 get anyone. You know, it's just that we have systems in
11 place that are not really working, and I know that everyone
12 here is dedicated to improving that and we want it to work.
13 Even though we're frustrated, we do appreciate your time
14 being here and working on these issues.

15 SAVUSA: Yeah, me, too, I'm really thankful to come all
16 the way downtown. No, I'm just kidding. So, you know,
17 for -- like Vu said, it really is relationships for me. And
18 that the other thing that I want to caution you guys is that
19 the challenges seem insurmountable, but that's okay, you
20 know, that's out there and, you know, what can you do for
21 yourself and -- because we can't do everything alone as
22 individuals, but, you know, we can be strategic about our
23 relationships with each other and the work that's happening.

24 You guys all know me now and all of us now, so there's no
25 excuse for you not to have -- to figure out what you can do

1 kind of in your work. And there's resources that are right
2 here that you can just call. I'm leaving some cards. That
3 you can just call. And I want to call more people than just
4 Allen all the time, you know, for help on something. But,
5 you know, that is really important. And so if -- you know,
6 policies and procedures will always be in the way, and so I
7 really want you guys to figure out: How do I not let this
8 policy really screw me up and really just kind of sit with
9 it with the challenges that you have and rely on those
10 relationships that you have with each other too to get this
11 work done, because I need you guys for White Center to be a
12 stronger place for families. I really need you guys to have
13 open conversations and opportunities like this to -- so
14 folks can come in touch with your work and support you in
15 the decisions that you have to make here internally.

16 And so -- because we all have to hold each other
17 accountable too. You know, we have our issues too in the
18 community, believe me. Like, I'm sure we have stories
19 (inaudible) too, but, you know, it really -- I really just
20 urge you to kind of go outside your comfort zone in figuring
21 out how you're going to get the work done. We have a lot of
22 relationships with folks, key people in leadership positions
23 in the County, and, you know, for me, my relationship with
24 them is just as important as my relationship with all of you
25 here in this room. So let's figure out how we do the Race

1 and Social Justice stuff and really have this equity lens
2 that I keep hearing about in a way that makes sense for our
3 communities.

4 So thank you for asking us to be here.

5 BOCANEGRA: Well, I really don't know what -- how to end
6 it, but, you know, I know a couple of folks here that have
7 been doing this work for a number of years, and it's -- it's
8 rewarding in certain ways, you know, but I think the most
9 important part is that, you know, we're all in this
10 together, whether we like it or not, you know.

11 And the biggest problem that we end up facing is
12 resources, both the County and the people in the community,
13 you know. One of my biggest beefs with the whole issue of
14 human services has always been housing and it always has.
15 It's been a big serious problem for years in this county and
16 the city, and -- but over the years, you know, people have
17 hacked at it, hacked at it, hacked at it. And then when
18 people are about to hack at it, boy, you've got all the
19 gentrification coming in and all the people being thrown
20 out.

21 So, you know, one step forward, two steps backward, but I
22 think we're going to -- we're going to -- we're hoping that
23 we get this thing straightened out one way or another, you
24 know, and it's going to take everybody. I'm glad to be in
25 cahoots with all of you in terms of this work. Thank you.

1 SHEIKH HASSAN: Thank you very (inaudible). It's my honor
2 to be here today. We all know that -- we all care about our
3 community and, as Dow said, the community is changing a lot,
4 things are changing (inaudible) quite different. So the
5 County has to address that. And you cannot have the same
6 mentality that you had 30 or 40 years ago. Of course things
7 have changed now. So the environment is changing and still
8 keep changing all the time. With that being said, again,
9 I'm really, really (inaudible) having immigrant and refugee
10 commissioners. That place is going to be a place where all
11 the departments will come and give their input about their
12 ideas, how things are. And, in fact, there are quite a few
13 people out there who are ready to give you (inaudible). I
14 mean, you can't imagine how it changes (inaudible) or how
15 they do things. It takes time. But, in fact, if you can
16 reach out, even an (inaudible) helpful too.

17 But in the meantime that -- next to that is more
18 visibility. I mean, the County is not visible to the
19 communities out there. I mean, basically, wherever you go
20 you see Seattle, but the County is not visible. I think the
21 county is much larger than Seattle. Seattle has a limited
22 (inaudible). When you look at the immigrant and refugee
23 community, we are all over the county. I mean, most of
24 Seattle, in fact. And when you see the surface, it's not
25 most about -- I mean, getting the service that they need

1 other than housing and health, so -- but I think more
2 visibility would be very helpful. And simplify the
3 (inaudible) and the language. I mean, the (inaudible) and
4 language are the most difficult part of it. I mean,
5 simplify and simplistic (inaudible) people understand.
6 (Inaudible) people convey the message in some language that
7 they understand. I mean, more often we use a higher
8 language, technical language, then people don't really make
9 any sense (inaudible). So that goes a long way.

10 And, again, the media, the media, the media, that's quite
11 (inaudible). The community organizations are a resource for
12 you guys, and each and every one of the community members
13 are there for their -- for the love of their people in the
14 community. I mean, it's a pain. It's not really -- it's
15 frustrating. And when you are the leader, they expect
16 everything from you. When you (inaudible) for government,
17 they expect everything from. You cannot imagine how many
18 calls I'm getting which have nothing to do with it just
19 because (inaudible) out there until you understand the
20 language of government.

21 So please (inaudible) you have manpower (inaudible). I
22 (inaudible) every department have diverse culture of the
23 people that they are serving. It's unfortunate that we have
24 this huge number of immigrant and refugees, but when we look
25 at the number of employees for the County it doesn't really

1 match the count. It's absolutely not. I think this is
2 (inaudible) direction and I hope that it can (inaudible) a
3 lot information down there and (inaudible). This is a dream
4 of the people that you're serving. Be careful what you
5 (inaudible). It might not harm. It might help people.
6 Just have that -- I know everybody has their minds
7 (inaudible), but sometimes, if we do get the right idea, it
8 might affect and address (inaudible) communities.

9 Thank you very much.

10 VALENZUELA: Okay. So, you know, our planning team came
11 up with some of the questions. I think we were thinking
12 about talking about access and technology. The
13 conversations that we had I think went a whole nother level.
14 You're talking about kind of fundamentally changing how we
15 do business, talking about our work force, what we look like
16 and how reflective we are in the community. We talked about
17 resources and how we allocate our resources, who we fund and
18 how we do that, and then also about being real and getting
19 out to the community. I think that means some really very
20 meaningful things that I think we as a group now have a
21 responsibility to take that back and make sure we
22 incorporate it. We got what we asked for, and now we need
23 to put it on paper and move forward.

24 So I just want to thank the panelists. You guys have been
25 extremely generous. This is another one of those unfunded

1 things --

2 (Inaudible colloquy)

3 VALENZUELA: So --

4 SHEIKH HASSAN: (Inaudible) hummus.

5 VALENZUELA: And the water was really good.

6 (Inaudible colloquy)

7 LE: We got water.

8 SAVUSA: So I'm going to leave some cards here, you guys.

9 (Inaudible colloquy)

10 (Conclusion of panel discussion)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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)
County of Snohomish)

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